

Address delivered by Congressman John E. Fogarty, June 3, 1951 at the Communion Breakfast of the ladies of St. Philip's Church, Greenville, R.I.

I am genuinely honored to be called back from Washington for the purpose of addressing you, the women of my own parish, on the occasion of this Communion Breakfast.

Events of lasting significance crowd each other with such lightning speed that many of us are apt to become confused in the swiftly moving life which is ours. There are so many causes for worry and concern in day to day happenings that some of us are threatened with a feeling of discouragement.

Today you women have taken time to go to the altar of your God and receive there the precious Body and Blood of the Creator of all mankind. There is, I would think, no better opportunity for reflection; for consideration of the role you are called upon to play in our nation's life; and for resolution that you will strive mightily to discharge your responsibilities as a Catholic American woman.

There was a time when men seriously insisted that women's place was in the home. Industry, business, politics - all phases of our national life - were in the hands of men who believed women should not be bothered with the sordid facts of worldly affairs; and the few women who raised their voices to comment on current events were considered, to say the least, unusual.

America has grown substantially since those days and there is no longer surprise when women insist on playing an active role in all walks of life. In fact, it is obvious, that most times men slant their statements and their conduct in order to win the approval of the great body of American women.

There can be no gainsaying the fact that American women have contributed in great measure to the development of the United States to the point where, today,

it is the most powerful nation on earth.

During World War II, our productive capacity staggered the world with the magnitude of its output. Today we are witnessing a return to high gear of that machinery with indications already that the maximum output will exceed that of the late war period.

Our scientists have outstripped the world in the production of all sorts of weapons of destruction, as well as all manner of medicines intended to promote the health of mankind.

Here we have more automobiles, more telephones, more domestic appliances than anywhere on the globe. Our Libraries, our Colleges and Universities, surpass those of any nation. We have the finest private and public school system on earth.

And, while we have all these things contributing to a better life for all Americans, we also enjoy more privileges and more opportunities than is provided for any other people.

This situation did not come about by accident. The industrial might of the United States was built by men of vision and ambition - both in the ranks of labor and management. Men who trained themselves well in the skills that were necessary, who contributed their sweat and their strength, helped build mighty industrial empires. Men of determination coupled with industrial knowhow built better products and sold their need to all the world.

And today, this Nation, under God, dedicated to the cause of freedom and justice stands ready and able to meet any crisis which might arise.

Through all this development there has been a constant insistence on attention to the material aspects of life.

Without the constant vigilance of ordinary mortals guarding the fires in

a huge steel plant, the heavy industry machinery of the nation would grind to a halt.

Without a small bolt in a track-switch, or a tiny bearing in a locomotive wheel, the country's transportation system could bog down.

Men of skill and training in financial circles must maintain never-ending diligence in order that the huge investments of thousands of people, big and little, be protected against sudden fluctuations.

While admitting the vital necessity of attention to these material things it occurs to me that we are giving a false picture of our democracy, to our own people and to the peoples of the world with whom we plead the cause of peace.

This nation was founded on a firm belief in Divine Providence. That is the thread which runs through the pattern of real democracy. We here believe in the dignity of the individual as the creature of God; that all government comes from the consent of the governed. We are presently engaged in bitter contest with the ideology that man exists for the state; and that whatever powers or privileges he enjoys are given to him by the state.

We spend millions on propaganda which is disseminated all around the globe. Our overseas diplomats and business men are regarded as salesmen for democracy and they are urged constantly to advance the sterling qualities of the democratic system.

Men in public life and renowned educators repeat words like freedom and justice and the sanctity of the individual, yet so often does it appear that material things make up the real standard of American performance that friend and foe alike must often be confused. It seems, sometimes, that we are trying to hide the real background of the democracy we boast of and instead give to the world a picture of industrial, financial and military might. I think most of the little people of the world must be sick of all three.

I think it is worthwhile that some of us take up the cudgels and inaugurate a world-wide crusade for a return to the teachings and practices approved by the God who made us.

You women who are, or one day will be the mothers of the land, should feel a special responsibility in this regard.

No longer are you compelled to sit idly by watching men make fools of humanity. You are accepted in all circles, your support is enlisted by candidates for public office, and your approval is solicited by manufacturers of every gadget which appears in the market place.

An examination of the daily papers, and the magazines on news-stands demonstrate that advertisers of all sorts of devices, from drinking glasses to railroad trains, make a special appeal to the interests of women. Why then, should women not insist that attention be given to their voices in the formation of national and international policies which affect the future of all Americans.

You women, today, publicly acknowledge your faith in God. You **MUST** believe that it is possible to bring God back to a position where His influence will guide the destiny of your country.

It is not enough merely to wish that this could be so. You must will it.

The time is ripe. There may never be such a glorious opportunity.

Here every citizen has a right to take an active part in public affairs. Yet, year after year, we witness the disgraceful spectacle of thousands upon thousands refusing, through neglect or ignorance, to exercise their right to vote.

Many citizens refuse to keep themselves well-informed, shunning the tedious task of, examining the issues before them, but, instead accepting the high-sounding phrases of glib and polished public speakers.

Ivory-towered commentators are permitted to make decisions for us, as we sit before our radios and televisions, accepting as Gospel the tortured decisions of self-serving opinion molders, merely because they are presented in a dramatic fashion.

Many times we accept as truth whatever we are told and live to regret false decisions arrived at, only because we refused to analyze things for ourselves.

If we persist in such apathy, we can blame no one but ourselves for the disintegration of America, which will certainly come about unless there is a more-enlightened and more aggressive citizenry. I plead with you to make a start somewhere.

Learn all there is to know about the conduct of your public officials, at all levels. Make it your business to know all there is to be learned about every issue confronting your lawmakers and your executives. Make your decisions wisely, after mature thought, and in the light of Christian Charity and Justice. Then, having arrived at a conclusion, raise your voice and make certain that it is heard.

If more women would take an active part in politics, better men would be candidates for public office. There would be less quibbling and more facing up to difficult decisions.

If men in public life were made aware that the women of the country were watching their conduct after election, there would be less carelessness and less loose juggling of the truth.

Women in public life, and women who, though remaining at home, preserved a keen interest in public affairs, could soon beat down the materialist concepts which seem to dominate all today's thinking.

There would be a little less emphasis on power and position and plunder, and a little more insistence on decency and devotion to duty. There would be less selfishness and greed and more soulfulness and gratitude for what a good God has given to us. There would be less reliance on the almighty dollar and more reliance on Almighty God.

In the gloomy, cloudy, confused world in which we live, there is hope only in the spirit which you possess this morning. I plead with you to guard it well for the peaceful ordering of your own, and your families' lives; and in the

hope that you can infuse some of it into the lives of others.

If you will love your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul, you will then love your neighbor as yourself.

Obedience to these commandments, I am convinced, is the only hope for permanent peace; I am also convinced that obedience to these commands is a guarantee of peace.

MADE IN U.S.A.

W. MANNIFOLD